

**Jontae Koke**

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To Whom It May Concern,

Scotts Bluff National Monument (SBNM) is in support of this project fund request. SBNM has been a staple of the Nebraska panhandle since its establishment in 1919. On average, the monument hosts approximately 176,000 visitors annually, from all around the world, with a large portion of visitors from local and surrounding communities.

SBNM does not currently have fiber optic service and does not have fast enough internet to provide distance learning programs. SBNM also does not have fast enough internet to support public Wi-Fi, so a high-speed fiber connection would allow the park to have accessible public Wi-Fi in the Visitor Center. SBNM does not currently have funding in place to pay for/contract for the burying of cable.

High-speed internet could also be available to support the non-profit partner organization (Black Hills Parks & Forest Association) which operates a store inside the SBNM Visitor Center. Private residential areas surrounding the park boundary could also benefit from providing fiber to this area.

High-speed internet could support up to 12 permanent year-round staff, and an additional 5-10 staff members seasonally (May - October).

SBNM is free to the public, it is open year-round. The Visitor Center has served as a location for public gatherings/meetings, educational field trips, and numerous community-centered events.

Since this is a federal agency, compliance with federal laws is mandatory and screening for impacts must be completed prior to project initiation. The NPS has completed the environmental screening and required NHP screening and determined within the established parameters that no adverse effects should occur. Any deviation outside of what has been established within PEPC will need re-evaluated prior to work being initiated.

Sincerely,



**Jontae Koke**

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